

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation and is a perfect example of why the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ has opposed such consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Please protect the public interest by requiring SBG either to (a) wait to air the advertisement after the election, or (b) provide the Kerry campaign with equal time in an equally appealing time slot (also without commercial breaks and before election day) to present material to balance the "Stolen Honor" political advertisement.

Thank you.